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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9485  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 6013  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 3873  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 2396  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7079  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1064  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4452  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 0675  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA//  
INFO RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 6816

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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria/Cuba, Syria/Ukraine,  
Lebanon, Iraq, Palestinian Territories (6/8)

¶1. Summary: Papers reported that Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Faysal Miqdad conveyed an oral message from President Asad to President Fidel Castro of Cuba during his meeting with Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque. The message focused on recent political developments in the Middle East and Latin America and on Syria's full solidarity with the Cuban people in the face of the American siege that has been imposed on Cuba for more than 40 years. The message expressed Syria's appreciation for Cuba's hosting the forthcoming summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Havana, and Syria's hope that the summit will enhance the movement's role in finding solutions to the political, economic and social challenges that member states are facing. The Cuban Foreign Minister expressed his country's support for Syria's national and principled stances in the face of the unjust pressures put on her and Syria's struggle to restore the occupied Golan.

Papers also reported the visit to Damascus by Stanislav Stashevesky, First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, and his meetings with Foreign Minister Walid al-Mouallem. Stashevesky underlined Syria's importance in the region, expressed satisfaction with the trade volume between the two countries and expressed his interest in expanding Syrian exports to Ukraine.

End of Summary.

¶2. Selected Headlines:

"A message from President Asad to President Castro conveyed by Deputy Foreign Minister Miqdad: Syria is confident of enhancing the NAM role in the forthcoming stage. Cuba reiterates support for Syria's just rights" (Government-owned Tishreen, 6/8)

"Foreign Minister Mouallem discusses current developments and bilateral relations with Stanislav Stashevesky, First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine" (Government-owned Tishreen, 6/8)

"Lebanese powers confirm, on the eve of the Lebanese dialogue: Eradication of resistance and assuming power are priorities for

the February 14 powers. Karami: The government must be foiled.  
Oun: A defensive strategy must be discussed. Mansour: Demand for  
demarcating Syrian-Lebanese borders is unpatriotic; the Security

Council is a tool in the US hand" (Government-owned Al-Thawra,  
6/8)

"Italian FM Dalima announces that pullout of Italian forces from  
Baghdad will be accomplished before the end of the year. US  
Senate demands revelation of secrets of the Al-Haditha massacre"  
(Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/8)

"Tehran expresses readiness to reach an understanding on its  
nuclear crisis. Expectations on resuming dialogue with the West.  
Iranian FM Mitki: We prefer cooperation to confrontation"  
(Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/8)

"Five Palestinian factions reject referendum on the Prisoner  
Document and support dialogue. Forces of the Palestinian Ministry  
of Interior withdraw from streets" (Government-owned Tishreen,  
6/8)

### 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"All of Us Are Within Israel's Security Lebensraum"

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Isam Dari, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen,  
commented on the 25th anniversary of Israel's air strike against  
the Iraqi nuclear reactor and the statement by the then Israeli  
PM Begin that Israel would not allow any threat from any country  
within its 'lebensraum,' which includes all Arab countries and  
neighboring Islamic countries:

"All Arabs are targeted by the Israeli-American danger.... Arab  
brothers who believe they are safe from the dangers that blow  
from the West are mistaken. And those who believe that the  
current US Administration is only settling old and new scores  
with Syria are mistaken....

"It is true that Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon are being targeted  
these days, and that Iran has been added to this American list.  
What is truer, however, is that all Arabs, and even their  
neighbors, are targeted as long as they fall within what Israel  
calls the Israeli lebensraum...."

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"Dialogue and Cabinet"

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Shawkat Abu-Fakhr, a commentator in government-owned Al-Ba'th,  
wrote (6/8): "The Lebanese national dialogue is to be resumed  
today.... What is noteworthy is the climate of escalation and  
media exaggeration launched by some forces in Lebanon as part of  
their attempts to mobilize the public against the resistance and  
its weapons....

"UN Envoy Tejre Roed-Larsen is contributing to this climate  
through his statements, which cannot be read as statements made  
by a neutral international diplomat who is very familiar with  
the facts of the conflict....

"Some groups seek to create sedition in Lebanon through obvious  
attempts to harm the resistance and its sacrifices.... Other  
Lebanese groups are, however, showing a sense of responsibility  
and working to avoid splits and divisions among the Lebanese....

"The overwhelming majority of Lebanese now see the sessions of  
the dialogue conference as a waste of time, especially as they  
struggle against economic and social hardship...."

## "International Responsibility"

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Omar Jaftali, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (6/8): "The International Quartet and the world community in general must shoulder their responsibility and stop Israel's 'organized terrorism' and 'gradual genocide' against Palestinians.... Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, who won US support for his unilateral withdrawal plan, has begun implementing this plan, although he claims he will meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas as the last opportunity before the implementation...."

"If the meeting takes place, it will not be better than the previous dozens of Israeli-Palestinian meetings that Israel exploited for media consumption and to delude world public into thinking that the peace process was still politically alive...."

Seche